

WILMINGTON DISTRICT NEWS
ONLINE

SEPTEMBER 2007

A CONSTANT VIGIL**ALL EYES TRAINED ON CORPS
DAMS TO ENSURE SAFETY**INSIDE THIS
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Ann Hinds of the Wilmington District's Dam Safety Program studies maps of areas near Philpott Dam.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is a leader in developing engineering criteria for safe dams, and conducts an active inspection program of its own dams. The Corps also carries out inspections at many dams built by other federal, state and local agencies and private interests by request. The primary objective of the

Corps' Dam Safety Program is to maintain public safety by making sure the dams it owns and operates are safe and risks to the public are minimized.

Don Smith of the Wilmington Regional Engineering Center is the Dam Safety and Bridge Inspection Safety Program Manager for the Charleston, Savannah, and Wilmington Districts located at the Savannah District.

"We take our dam and bridge inspections seriously, and I feel the Corps has a good inspection program," he said. "We look at dams primarily every five years for a comprehensive inspection, and we have annual inspections for embankments and other dam features. At all projects, our Corps people check dams monthly, reading instrumentation and getting good visual observations."

Smith said that in 2005 the Corps started screening dams for a risk assessment program. Each USACE District identified dams within their jurisdiction

PRESIDENT PROCLAIMS NATIONAL HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH

Hispanic Americans have strengthened our country and contributed to the spirit of America. National Hispanic Heritage Month is an opportunity to honor these contributions and celebrate the rich cultural traditions of our Hispanic-American community.

Hispanic Americans have helped establish America as a place of freedom and opportunity, and their contributions have illustrated what is best about our great Nation. Their hard work, love of country, and deep commitment to faith and family have shaped the character of our country and helped preserve the values we all cherish. By sharing their vibrant culture and heritage, Hispanic Americans have also enriched the American experience and helped define the unique fabric of our Nation.

Americans of Hispanic heritage have carried on a proud tradition of

service to our Nation. In times of great consequence, they have answered the call to defend America as members of our Armed Forces. These brave men and women bring honor to America, and we are grateful for their service and sacrifice. In our towns and communities, Hispanic Americans have also shown the good heart of our Nation by volunteering to help their fellow Americans. Their kindness and compassion have made a difference in the lives of others and have made our country a more hopeful place for all.

During National Hispanic Heritage Month, we celebrate the diversity that makes America stronger, and we recognize the many ways Hispanic Americans have enriched our Nation. To honor the achievements of Hispanic Americans, the Congress, by Public Law 100 402, as amended, has authorized and requested the President to issue annually a proclamation designating Sep-

tember 15 through October 15 as "National Hispanic Heritage Month."

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GEORGE W. BUSH, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim **September 15 through October 15, 2007**, as National Hispanic Heritage Month. I call upon public officials, educators, librarians, and all the people of the United States to observe this month with appropriate ceremonies, activities, and programs.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this twelfth day of September, in the year of our Lord two thousand seven, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-second.

GEORGE W. BUSH

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District Commander: COL John E. Pulliam, Jr.

Chief, Public Affairs: Penelope Schmitt

Managing Editor: Hank Heusinkveld

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Wilmington District



U.S. ARMY ENGINEER SPECIALIZED SEARCH DOGS INVALUABLE “SOLDIERS”

By Captain Danielle M. Roche & James Pettit

Article Courtesy
Army Engineer Magazine

In 2002, the United States Army Engineer Regiment was directed by the Vice Chief of Staff of the Army to establish a unique dog detachment at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri. Training for two types of engineer detection dogs was specified—mine detection dogs (MDDs) and specialized search dogs (SSDs). Each type of dog would have different capabilities and operational uses but would share the same mission: minimizing the threat to Soldiers from explosive hazards. Since 2003, trained teams consisting of a handler and a military working dog have been continuously deployed to Afghanistan and Iraq, served in National Training Center rotations, and provided countless demonstrations and briefings to educate the U.S. military about the capabilities, limitations, and employment techniques of MDD and SSD teams. In 2005, the detachment reorganized and grew to three detachments. More growth of the engineer dog teams is planned to occur in 2008.

While MDDs are trained to find land mines and buried unexploded ordnance, SSDs are trained to find firearms,



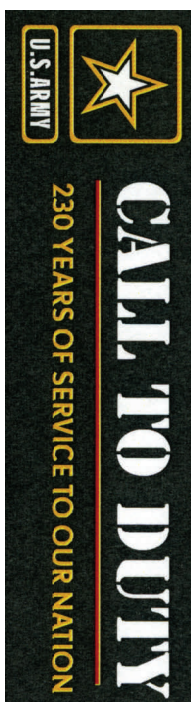
Ready for Duty! A Black Lab SSD waits for orders.

ammunition, and explosives during route searches, building searches, open areas, and vehicle searches at all threat levels. SSDs always work under the direct control of their handler. The SSD concept is based on the firearms, ammunition, explosive detection dogs developed by the British Army for use in counterterrorist operations. The United Kingdom (UK) is currently the world leader in training explosive detection dogs and produces some of the highest quality dogs available. Using the knowledge base and experience from the UK, the U.S. Army hired several retired UK dog trainers to serve as instructors for the United States Air Force SSD course at Lackland Air Force Base, Texas, and the United States Army Engineer School MDD course at Fort Leonard Wood.

The four-month SSD course trains combat engineers along with Marines, Air-



A handler displays buried explosives found by his specialized search dog.



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that they believed had the highest potential risk based upon their internal evaluation. From this group of structures, experts evaluated the structures and classified them into five basic risk categories:

1. Urgent & Compelling – Active failure in progress or extremely high risk of failure possible.

2. Urgent – Failure expected as the result of an event such as a flood or earthquake or very high risk of failure.

3. High Priority – High risk to property loss and/or loss of life if

failure occurs.

4. Priority – Probability of failure is low but not tolerable.

5. Normal – Adequately safe, meeting USACE guidelines.

“Our projects in the Wilmington District have been screened,” he said. “Of the projects screened to date, Fall Lake Dam, has been identified as a Dam Safety Action Classification (DSAC) Category 3. What this means is that although the dam is structurally sound it does have significant risk for economic loss and loss of life in the downstream areas if a failure occurred. Routine and periodic in-

spections and evaluations will continue, and we’re currently drafting an Interim Risk Reduction Measure Plan (IRRMP). The resulting actions from the IRRMP would result in lowering the risk classification to a category 4.”

In the South Atlantic Division, Smith added, the Jacksonville District’s Herbert Hoover project has serious problems and is a DSAC I dam.

Dam inspection is thorough, and no shortcuts are ever taken. Ann Hinds, a civil engineer assisting Smith with the Wilmington District’s Dam Safety Program, said when doing physical dam inspections she looks for obvious signs like trickles of water or small cracks.

“We look for any seepage or instability and we look for cracks or irregularities in the slopes. But we have a very good front line of defense. Our project managers and rangers are at the site all of the time. They basically do an inspection every time they’re on the dams. They get training every four years, so they know what to look for. Also the supervisors at



Don Smith: “We take our dam and bridge inspections seriously, and I feel the Corps has a good inspection program.”

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projects train new employees once they come on board.”

Hinds said if a leak or crack developed into something greater there would be an immediate fix to thwart an even greater problem.

“A dam could have a small hole and depending on the type of material that dam is made from it could grow larger. Seepage occurs when there is pressure from the water in the reservoir that’s constantly pushing against the dam. But most dams are built in different layers. The core layer, usually clay, is less porous to restrict water flow. Behind that is a filter layer, so if any seepage does get through it goes through sand that will filter any particles and prevent any movement of material.”

Hinds emphasized that if there is out-of-the-norm seepage there is immediate notification. However, inspectors know the difference between good and bad seepage.

“At John H. Kerr, for example, we have what’s called a controlled seepage. It’s natural for water to seep through. Water will always find a way to get through, so that’s why we have a filtering system to



“The most important people who are monitoring dams are the people at the projects themselves. They’re there every day.” Don Smith

control the seepage a prevent particle movement. And this controlled seepage is monitored for any changes in flow or clarity.”

Then there are the unseen workings in the interior of a dam that could pose potential problems. But like a physician with a stethoscope on a human body, engineers have devices to check a dam’s inner body.

“We have instrumentation on all of our dams that monitor water levels. Those levels are checked monthly or at other cycles every so often. There are numerous checks and balances.”

Smith said that constant observation is key to ensuring dam safety. In addition, USACE headquarters keeps upgrading safety measures.

“Each year there are more and more guidelines about dam safety. In fact our division office is involved now in more detailed methods of safety. And again, the most important people who are monitoring dams are the people at the projects themselves. They’re there every day, and if they ever see something unusual they know to call Ann or myself.” ■

“TEAM WICKER” REGULATORY BIOLOGIST AND HIS KIDS SPEND TIME BUILDING STREAMLINED RACING KAYAK

**Article and photos
by Hank Heusinkveld**

At the Wicker household near Ogden the first thing you notice is numerous kayaks and canoes. There’s one on top of a car parked in the driveway, and out in the backyard there’s a stack of three or four more. But in the garage is a 21-foot, streamlined kayak under construction. It’s called a Chesapeake Light Craft Tandem. It came in a kit to Regulatory biologist Henry Wicker as a Father’s Day present from his kids.

The Wickers are competitors. Henry and daughter Christy, a Cape Fear Community College student and part-time Wilmington District employee in CPAC, have raced in various competitions. And Henry himself used to race when he was younger. So, to keep up with their competitive nature the kids picked the boat because it’s hydro dynamically designed, hoping that it will give them an edge in their next race.



Allen, Henry, Mack and Christy Wicker pose in front of their streamlined racing boat.

“I’ve raced for a long time and I’ve paddled with some of the best guys around,” he stated. “Those guys taught me how to use my back muscles and other techniques to become faster. I think this boat will put us ahead in our next race.”

A tight-knit family, the kids have picked up on their Dad’s need to compete. They’ve spent a lot of hours sanding, gluing and putting up with fiberglass particles on their mission. Right now



Christy and Henry Wicker, foreground, keep up their momentum in a race held at Wrightsville Beach. (Photo by Alex Rhodes.)

they’re about halfway done after getting a late start.

“We decided to begin building it the first of August because we had some parts that were damaged and we had to send them back,” he explained. “When we started, everything was eight-foot lengths and had to be glued together. But first we had to build a 23-foot long table to hold the boat.”

Wicker said his kids, including twins Allen and Mack, pitched in right at the start and helped him begin gluing the parts together. As they got further into the family project they discovered that there was a unique technique that made this boat-building adventure interesting.

“What’s so neat about this one is that it’s ‘stitched’ together,” said Henry. “We had to drill holes into the wood and took some copper wire and twisted it to stitch.”

Daughter Christy was a bit skeptical about “stitching” a boat together. “I didn’t think it was going to work at first.”

But there was plenty of reassurance that the project would be a success from ole’ Dad, and they continued to follow the in-

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"TEAM WICKER" CON'T



Christy and Mack smooth out the rough edges on their boat with a sander.

structions with their family project. Having built a few boats before with *his* Dad, Henry's experience was enough to convince them that they'd be able to complete the project.

"Well, we talked about it for a long time, and I just knew we could build it. I knew it would take some time, but I've

built other boats with my Dad and I knew we could do it. It's just step by step, take your time. We're about half way there right now."

The Wicker family is focused and committed. Of course there are times when family squabbles arise...light-heartedly, of course;

Christy- "Allen keeps inviting me NOT to help him!"

Allen - "Christy will come and find us at the end of a particular

project on any particular day. Whenever we're done at the end of the day she'll find something...and then complain!"

Henry- "She'll say 'wait til I get home before you start working.' I don't know when she'll get home, but I just get started," he said with a smile.

Out of the blue, Mack pipes in with a subtle, dry comment. "Dad just calls me out here whenever he needs help, so I don't really do much on it."

A debate about the physical aspects of boat racing comes up.

Christy- "It's endurance. I really think it's endurance."

Henry- "Well, there's a lot of technique."

Christy- "Well, I don't have technique, but I get through it!"

Henry (laughing hard) "She does a good job. She does a really good job."

Allen- "It's all skill, baby!" (Which brings Henry to even more laughter.)

Whether it's the design of the boat or technique or endurance that wins races, the whole point is not the boat itself, but that it's a project the Wickers enjoy doing together as a family.

"It's fun being with the kids and they're learning good things from this. But the pressure's on now. This boat's gotta' float!" ■



Henry explains how the epoxy that comes in the kit helps make the boat watertight.



In yet another race, Henry and Christy compete in a boat owned by Chief of Planning and Environmental Coleman Long.

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men, and military police Soldiers. Before the training moved to Lackland Air Force Base, the training was performed at Fort Leonard Wood, where three graduating classes trained a total of 21 Soldiers to be SSD handlers.

To obtain the maximum value from the services of trained MDD and SSD teams, it is essential to have a sound understanding of the capabilities and conditions for their employment. Both types of dogs provide a fast and efficient detection capability that can save lives.

They have excellent mobility and utility over ground that is not accessible to vehicles and other mechanical clearance and detection equipment. They can detect a device without touching the device itself, providing safety to the handler and those around them. The dogs can recognize mines, unexploded ordnance, explosives, firearms, and ammunition by the distinctive odor of the explosives or other components of the devices. The dogs then show a change in behavior, recognizable by the handler, indicating that they have discovered a scent they have been trained to locate.

Using dogs is much faster than using mechanical or manual searches and reduces the time spent on searches. However, the actual continuous working time and the number of tasks that the teams can perform will depend on the ability and character of the individual dog. Engineer dogs are trained to be bold, to be steady under gunfire, and not to be distracted by other animals. They can work in areas and situations where personnel, movement, and noises are present. It is imperative to note that dog teams are not a stand-alone system for conducting detection opera-

tions. The teams require security at all times, and may often require an escort to assist in maneuvering through areas. If the mission dictates that an obstacle or threat must be cleared, engineers or explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) personnel will be required. Dog handlers are not trained for deactivating, destroying, or clearing obstacles or threats.

One challenge to the use of dogs in detection operations is the fact that a dog can only be handled by one Soldier at a time. Because of the extensive training and the rapport that the team must develop, there is only one handler per dog and one dog per handler. Dogs may suffer a lowering of performance if excessive distracting elements are present, may be reluctant to negotiate areas that may prove physically harmful, and may be of little value for searching persons. The dogs are trained to work with Soldiers who always carry weapons and explosives, so using the dogs to search persons could confuse the dogs.

Commanders are encouraged to request SSD teams before entering areas with a high probability of encountering impro-

vised explosive devices (IEDs), weapon caches, or explosives. Once a team is assigned to support a mission and the handler is briefed, the commander should obtain the handler's recommendations for the most effective employment of the team and the best working positions, consistent with the factors that influence the dog's detection capabilities. The dog team should participate in any mission rehearsals. The commander must ensure that



Looking like a bird hunter with his bird dog, this pooch and his handler are on yet another search to find dangerous items.

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security and safety are provided for the team at all times. For extended missions, dog teams require administrative, logistical, and operational support. They also require veterinary support throughout a deployment, but the United States Army Veterinary Command handles this at most deployment locations. The engineer dog detachments have assigned veterinary technicians that deploy with the dog teams. The teams deploy with field expedient kennel facilities sufficient for short-term operations but require semipermanent facilities for long-term operations.

Based on the support requirements detailed above, SSD teams usually are based at forward operating bases. This allows SSD handlers to conduct the required realistic training and gives them access to theater-specific firearms, ammunition, and explosives to maintain the proficiency of the dog teams for maximum mission effectiveness. It is in the commander's interest that the dogs be familiar with every known explosive and other casualty-producing device that the unit may encounter. Although the dogs receive continuation training when not on missions, the handlers' access to the latest items is limited. When possible, supported units should provide samples of any new or different devices encountered in the field so the dogs can become familiar and proficient with finding them. EOD units can best assist the dog teams with specific training aids.

Lastly, before a dog is introduced to a new operational environment, the team should be given the time and resources to practice searching under appropriate conditions. This ensures that the dog is physically capable of locating explosives and other casualty-producing devices in the specific theater of operation.

The dog teams have a strict standard of performance and rigorous testing procedures. These can be compared with

a driver's license test, which aims to establish confidence in the ability to perform under some conditions without testing against all possible conditions. The same principle applies for a dog's operational accreditation test. Its purpose is to provide confidence in a basic capability to detect explosives. Passing an operational accreditation test is evidence of confidence and trust.

The greater complexity and danger of explosives detection requires that the proficiency standards for SSD teams be significantly higher than for any other type of dog team. Therefore, certification depends on the demonstrated knowledge and handling skill of the handler and the explosives detection rate of the SSD. Handler proficiency is evaluated by having the handler demonstrate detailed knowledge of the characteristics of each of the explosives the team is trained to detect, how these explosives may be used in explosive devices, and specific operational techniques used in the theater of operation.

Captain Roche is the commander of the 94th Engineer Detachment (Canine), Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri, and is an SSD supervisor. Her previous assignment was support platoon leader for Headquarters, Headquarters Company, 2d Engineer Battalion, 2d Infantry Division, Camp Castle, Korea. She is a graduate of George Mason University, Fairfax, Virginia, with a bachelor's in health and fitness.

Pettit developed and stood up the Engineer Detection Dog Program starting in 2001 and is the technical advisor to the Engineer Regiment on the use of detection dogs. He works for the Counter Explosive Hazards Center at the United States Army Engineer School, Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri. ■

A CELEBRATION OF NATIVE AMERICAN CULTURES HELD AT W. KERR SCOTT

By **R.G. Absher**

About 2,500 visitors came to W. Kerr Scott's Fort Hamby Park to witness a variety of Native American dances, demonstrations, and story telling during the first annual intertribal Native American Pow Wow held between September 14 – 16 at Forest Edge Amphitheater. Many folks came out to see their first ever Pow Wow, and many came away with an appreciation of the culture and in some cases ancestral roots.

Opening day was a school day, and 4th grade students from area schools attended the Pow Wow with an emphasis on education of the Native American way of life. Eustace Conway, famed History Channel naturalist and builder of Turtle Island Preserve, was on hand during Friday events. Conway described the way that the Native Americans adapted and survived

in the native land. In addition, a Tee Pee was on display during Conway's presentation.

The area of W. Kerr Scott Lake has a deep and ancient history of Native American civilization which spans several peoples and tribes over many centuries. The most notable tribes were the Cherokee and Catawba who even fought for control of land in Western North Carolina at times during the colonial period. The Native American's of the region assisted early settlers in ways to use the land and

introduced the "three sisters," corn, beans and squash. Until now, those wishing to see the Native American culture had to drive two hours to Cherokee, NC to gain and learn first hand their way of life and customs. Now with the first successful Pow Wow in the books, plans are to make it an annual event.

The Intertribal Pow Wow Association is a non-profit organization and plans to return next year to host the second annual Pow wow at W. Kerr Scott.



DISTRICT MEMBER LEAVES USACE FOR NEW COMMAND IN EUROPE

U.S. Africa Command, or AFRICOM, officially stood up on 1 October when the organization reached its "initial operating capability" (IOC) to start functioning as the Pentagon's newest regionally-focused headquarters.

AFRICOM's IOC marks a realignment of the Defense Department's regional command structure, creating one headquarters staff that is responsible to the Secretary of Defense for U.S. military relations with 53 countries on the African continent. For its first year, AFRICOM will operate under U.S. European Command, which currently has responsibility for the bulk of U.S.-African military relationships, as it accepts oversight of the many programs and activities that the U.S. military conducts with African nations. AFRICOM is projected to become a fully operational unified command by Oct. 2008.

Since February 2007, a team of military and civilian specialists in Stuttgart, Germany, has been designing the organizational structure and developing mission focus areas for AFRICOM. The team, currently about 120 members, now represents the core staff of AFRICOM, and will continue to grow over the next year to fill out the new headquarters design. Joining that team will be Casey Newman of the Wilmington District. The native of Lagrange, North Carolina is looking forward to his new assignment, and the opportunity to live overseas in Europe.

"I never thought that I would be going to live in Europe when I was growing up, I can promise you that," he said. "I wanted to go and live in a bigger city, but I never thought about Europe. When this opportunity came up I thought about it seriously and it seemed like a good way to 'broaden my horizons.'"

Newman said he's a bit nervous about making such a huge change in his life, but feels his sense of adventure got the best of him.

"I think anybody can do it as long as they're not afraid of



B. Casey Newman

doing it. I'm diving into it head first. I haven't really had time to think about it. I'm just doing it."

While he's diving into the unknown he's looking at the change realistically.

"I expect *not* to know what's going on, to be very confused for a little while, and probably a little frustrated as far as the differences in culture. I'm not going expecting everything to be the same as they are in the states, I can promise you that. I'm going into it thinking that I'm going to have to accept a lot of differences and that it's going to be more difficult than I ever imagined...at least for the first six months. After that, I think it will smooth out." ■



Downtown Stuttgart, Germany will soon be Newman's playground.

WEBSITE HIGHLIGHTS

WITH BARBARA EKELUND

As the fall season opens, I've been reminded by our PA pundit that **Oktoberfest** is in the works, and Bavaria would be a wonderful place to visit this time of year. As a diversion, Corps employees are eligible to participate in the **Armed Forces Recreation Center Resorts (AFRC)** program. There are four resort locations that are available as vacation sites. The AFRC website (www.armymwr.com/portal/travel) offers tempting descriptions of the Edelweiss Lodge & Resort in the Bavarian city of Garmisch, Germany; the Hale Koa Hotel on Waikiki Beach in Hawaii; the Shades of Green at Walt Disney World in Florida; and, Dragon Hill Lodge in Seoul, South Korea. All are attractive, resort facilities.

A local get-away facility open to the Corps is the Fort Fisher Air Force Recreation Area (www.ftfishermilrec.com). The facility is open year round and offers basic accommodations—

both cottage and apartment rentals, tent/RV camping; a reception center; recreation hall, and restaurant. The Beach House Bar & Grill has a deck overlooking the Cape Fear River. There is a boat launch ramp and fishing pier on the adjacent beach. The recreation hall includes a pool, sport fields/courts and game room. The Toy Box rental center has bait and tackle, as well as beach/sport equipment rentals available.

Just for Fun!

Thinking ahead to the holiday season, the How Stuff Works website (www.howstuffworks.com) has interesting pages on the origin of Halloween, on roasting turkeys, the customs surrounding mistletoe and how Christmas lights work. Of course, the site also has the inside story on machines and electronics, too. Enjoy! ■



As ID card holders, USACE members can stay at Armed Forces Recreation Center facilities in Garmisch, Germany, located one hour south of Munich and the world famous Oktoberfest.

PASTOR BILL

FINDING THE WAY BACK HOME

Some time ago, I was wandering through the woods when I discovered I was completely lost. I'd been glancing at a map every now and then and believed I knew exactly where I was. I was listening to the birds and looking at the plants - just exploring the beauty of creation. My plan was to come out at a road some distance away and then walk back to my car. But when my walk led me back to the place where I'd eaten lunch an hour before, a dreadful realization came over me. I'd been circling. I was lost. It was then that I spent some time looking at the map in earnest - I needed to get home!



Bill Adams

it didn't expect to be.

Migrating birds are especially prone to this. If you've ever been surf fishing at sunrise in the fall you've probably seen small birds come flying in off of the ocean. These birds were migrating by the stars at night and when the sun came up they found themselves far out at sea. Talk about lost! They have good instincts though - they immediately start flying west. Sooner or later they will hit land.

It also happens in reverse. Sea birds like petrels or shearwaters can get caught-up in the eyes of hurricanes and be brought far inland, well away from their open ocean homes. When the storm dissipates, they find themselves in some pretty strange places. After Hurricane Hugo, bird watchers from many places flocked to Charlotte to see pelagic seabirds so far inland. But, eventually, these birds flew east and made it back home.

The point is, all can get lost - man or beast. Misreading the signs, following others, or life circumstances can take you pretty far a

field. But getting lost doesn't have to be a bad thing. I have found some pretty interesting places when I was lost, places that were far more interesting than the places I had originally intended to go. But biologically, getting lost can also have some very valuable and important benefits for species dispersal. Lost animals can be colonizers of new places; the Hawaiian and Galapagos Islands are wonderful examples of this principle. Much of the natural fauna of such islands is comprised of descendants of animals that were woefully lost, adrift at sea from far off places. And what fascinating and diverse biological treasures those islands are today.

But being physically lost is not the only way we get lost. We can also become temporally lost (ever lose track of the time?), emotionally lost (after becoming estranged from a loved one), and spiritually lost (feeling separated from God and creation). Sadly, for many of us, spiritual lostness has become so common that it now feels normal.

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But, just like being physically lost can have value, we can turn our spiritual lostness into a good thing if we allow it to lead us to new ways of understanding.

Perhaps the greatest story about this occurs in Luke 15, where the prodigal son finally realized that he was desperately lost. Through his lostness and his return back home, he discovered new things about the world and began to understand the nature and depth of his fathers love. Without getting lost, he might have

stayed home like the elder son and never learned these things.

Perhaps the greatest concentration of lost people today is in our prisons. But, surprisingly, I have heard from many inmates who say that being incarcerated is “the best thing that ever happened” to them. Once removed from society and forced to slow down, they realized how lost they were; that their very souls were being eaten by the evils that landed them there. They’d been caught up in the storms of life, just

like seabirds caught up in a hurricane and carried far from where they should be.

For many inmates, physically going home may no longer be possible. But a spiritual home is still available for all. And the Father is waiting there. They just need someone to show them the way. And so I go to them, an imperfect creature prone to getting lost myself, trying to give directions. I can only hope my directions meet their needs. ■

Corps Family News

Jayden Collins, daughter of Jocelyn and Roger Collins was born on June 5th at 11:26 pm . She weighed in at seven pounds, 11 ounces, and was 19 inches long. Her big sister and brother were very happy to finally meet her, as were mama and daddy.

